Approved for Release: 2020/08/17 C00023250

Brazil

BRAZIL

BRAZILIAN GANGSTERS AND THEIR DRUG TRAFFIC

[Article; Sao Paulo, Veja, Portuguese, 8 November 1972, pp 21-23]

The luggage of that tall, blondish man, apparently in his forties, whom the police had located in a small hotel in Feira de Santana, was not the appropriate luggage for an Uruguayan diplomat vacationing in Bahia, as he at first tried to identify himself. Among fine label clothes contained in his four suitcases he had one Browning pistol, one Beretta, both equipped with silencers, one short-nose caliber .38 Smith & Wesson, loaded with dumdum bullets, tranquilizing darts, 63 9 mm bullets, 22 7.65 mm bullets, and 38 assorted bullets, five pistol-loading cartridges, and five seals for forging passports.

After being taken to Salvador the supposed diplomat tried to commit suicide by cutting his wrists with a piece of glass. He was, however, rescued in time.

The diplomat turned out to be no diplomat at all. Likewise, the citizen Roberto Cavalaro was not just simply the owner of a fleet of 250 taxicabs, or a hot dog pushcarts distributing network, and of an aluminum window sash plant in Sao Paulo. Cavalaro was not even his true name. His real identity is Tomaso Buscetta, and he an outlaw. Likewise, the former fashion model Helena Ferreira who had mysteriously disappeared from Rio four months ago was not dead as some had thought. She was under arrest. And Roberto Boboulours, arrested approximately four months ago in Sao Paulo may, perhaps, not be just simply the owner of a night club highly patronized by night life Frenchmen stranded in Brazil. It has also been ascertained that Mr. Casalini, a resident of Tabajara Street in Rio, was not just simply the apartment house manager and the engineer who was greatly interested in rabbit breeding.

News recently leaked out from the police precinct in Rio and Sao Paulo disclosed the arrest of a pseudo diplomat, whose real identiy is the Frenchman Christian-Jacques David, de Casalini, de Boboulours, and of a considerable number of people whose names are predominantly of a French or Italian extraction such as Nicoli, Pastou, Canazzi, Gigante -- and disclosed a search for

(205)

8 Nov 72

(6)

APPROVED FOR RELEASE
Date 12 OCT 1980

Approved for Release: 2020/08/17 C00023250

Approved for Release: 2020/08/17 C00023250

a certain Mr Zippo, a resident of New York on a business trip in Brazil. Thus began to unfold the very definite outlines of a successful police operation which was a bull's-eye hit on an international drug peddlers' ring.

The Adventurers

In four typewritten pages containing 127 lines of explicit text, the Guanabara Safety Bureau disclosed last Tuesday the preventive arrest of several drug peddlers. The material contained also a startling biographical outline of some of them, to which new information was soon added.

Christian David is believed to be a known French gunman responsible for the murder of several policemen and the author of incredible deeds throughout the world, among which there is his one-time membership in the French Secret Service, services rendered to the Uruguayan Tupamaros, and to a leftist terrorist group in Argentina. He is also believed to have participated in the murder of the Moroccan opposition leader Mehdi Ben Barka, who was kidnapped and murdered in Paris in October 1965 under circumstances still not explained and of taking part in political attempts in Senegal, being also accused of acting as a hired killer in half a dozen countries. It is further believed that Christian, also known as "Beau Serge," had in addition connections with 60-year old Auguste Joseph Ricord, who was arrested in Paraguay in March of last year and who is now at the Nassau Penitentiary, near New York, and is considered by the "experts" on the war on drugs as the "drug king" in Latin America.

Tommaso Buscetta, whose surname was printed by some newspapers as Buschetta and discreetly omitted by Ibraim Sued in his daily TV programs because he considered it inelegant, would be a prominent member of the Mafia's new generation line known as "Clean Hands," i.e., criminals who conceal their activities behind commercial enterprises and regular businesses, among which, in the case of Buscetta, a pizza parlor chain in New York, where he lived for some time in a luxurious apartment in Ozone Park Drive, Queens.

At the beginning of the year, Tommaso Buscetta, Christian David, Nicoli, Mr Zippo, and a Lucien Sarti whose path by fate crossed with that of the former fashion model Helena Ferreira who became his mistress, met together for several days, while staying as guests at the Copacabana Palace Hotel in Rio, in order to decide how to make Brazil an important stopover on the troubled heroin trail from the poppy fields in Turkey or in Southeast Asia to the consumers in the United States.

Sarti, Nicoli, and David are supposed to have represented at this meeting a mysterious gangster organization internationally known as Union Corsa. It is believed that Buscetta and Zippo represented the Mafia.

Approved for Release: 2020/08/17 C00023250

Approved for Release: 2020/08/17 C00023250

A "Brazilian Connection"

Lucien Sarti died recently in Mexico after a shootout with the police. It is probable, however, that his survivors have really established here the groundwork to turn Brazil into a new "connection" that might replace the ever more closely watched-over city of Marseilles in South France, from which and up to 3 or 4 years ago, at least 85 percent of the drug from the East was distributed. It is even possible that in Brazil the Union Corse, a Mafia-like organization born on the barren hills of Corsica and which practically controls the entire heroin traffic in the world from its headquarters and kitchens (laboratories) in Marseilles, had approached its major rival, the Italian-American Mafia, in order to plan joint operations. This would validate, if true, the forecast of the United States police to the effect that the Mafia would be inclined to enter again the drug business from which its major "capi" in Sicily or in Manhattan had prudently withdrawn in the last two decades. Indeed, anything is possible when it is a matter of such old, and why not say it, fascinating characters.

It is not likely that Beau Serge has murdered dozens of African political leaders as it was initially affirmed. But he might have in fact worked with Ricord and might even have participated in the kidnapping of Ben Barka. He was considered by the French police as a not very intelligent gangster who was quick with the trigger and skillful in self-defense, in spite of his 21 sentences by French courts, one of which was for the murder of Maurice Galibert, chief of a police brigade, some time in February 1966. On that occasion, Galibert had been informed that one of the gangsters who had collaborated with the group which had kidnapped Ben Barka was at a bar called Saint-Clair, a popular gathering place for embassy personnel, high-class prostitutes, and gangsters who occasionally cooperated with the French Secret Service. Galibert was looking for a person whose name was supposedly Julien Le Ny. The inspector did not find Le Ny, but he recognized Christian David whom he knew to be a lesser automobile thief and decided to arrest him. Christian resisted, killed Galibert and seriously wounded two of his assistants. The French police and the press are now inquiring whether Le Ny and Christian were not the same person. It is possible; anything is possible.

From the Secret Service to Narcotics

It is also possible that Christian already had at that time important connections with the French Secret Service. It is known that on the day of the Saint-Clair bar incident, Christian upon being approached had shown Galibert a SAC [Service d'Action Civique; Civil Service Action] membership card, a parallel police organization created during the De Gaulle administration. It is also rumored that one of Galibert's policemen tried to convince him that Christian was in fact "one of them."

The criminal record of Beau Serge from SAC and all the way to Auguste Ricord, through his experiences with the Tupamaros, and in Senegal, and in the Frente Armada de Libertaçao [Armed Liberation Front] in Argentina from where he fled when it became known that he was working for the communist and not for the

Approved for Release: 2020/08/17 C00023250

Approved for Release: 2020/08/17 C00023250

Peron followers, shows how devious and intricate a path can be in the drug-world. As a matter of fact, while the "French Connection," i.e., Marseilles was being publicized in a book and through a motion picture with a box-office success--it was already being abandoned by the major drug peddlers. Marseilles which was once defined by the United States Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, as a spinning platform from which heroin was broadcasted to the world, has not provided the police records for approximately the last 2 years any new cases of large drug catches, or of the discovery of new laboratories or arrests of "big bosses."

The Discovery of the American

The latest victories of the war on narcotics recently announced by John E. Ingersoll, director of the bureau of narcotics, took place in Latin America. In the beginning of February five important drug peddlers were arrested in La Paz. An important cocaine processing laboratory was dismantled in a Chilean resort. In Lima, a gang which in addition to drugs was engaged in introducing counterfeit dollars into Peru was captured. Joseph Sereni was arrested in Venezuela while carrying 16 kilos of heroin. Other persons well-known to international bureaus of narcotics such as Jean-Paul Angeletti, Paul Karamian, Renzo Rogai, and François Chiappe, were spotted in their activities which led them from Argentina or Paraguay to Panama. In the period of 1 year, between September 1970 and September 1971, the United States police in Miami confiscated more than 200 kilos of heroin and 80 kilos of cocaine from Latin America. Finally, 1 month ago, policemen from the United States, Brazil, and Argentina, found aboard the "Mormac-Altair" ship, right in Guanabara Bay, 60 kilos of heroin from Buenos Aires.

These figures are not very impressive when taking into account that about 50 tons of pure heroin are distributed yearly in the world. But for the "narcs," United States agents in the war on narcotics, this is a good illustration of the extent to which the "Latin American Connection" was active until recently.

The Correct Recipe

"Take a beautiful woman, a former fashion model, mix her with a group of international gangsters, add a dash of romance and two or three shipments of narcotics...simmer it all together over the low fire of unproductive investigations and the result will be similar to the disappearance of Helena Ferreira, a fashion model prematurely retired at the age of 25 owing to her unconventional way of life."

These were the opening lines used by O Globo, a Rio newspaper, in another article on the case of the missing fashion model. The recipe was exactly right. Soon thereafter, however, it became increasingly more difficult for the reporters to pursue the clues and the case, as well as Helena Ferreira herself, died out on the newspaper pages. At the Sao Paulo DEOPS [State Department of Political and Social Order] police precinct, however, she continued very much alive, disclosing information which would result in the arrest of Beau Serge, Buscetta, Nicoli, Casalini, Canazzi, etc.

Approved for Release: 2020/08/17 C00023250

Approved for Release: 2020/08/17 C00023250

The name of Helena first appeared in connection with the narcotics traffic when Lucien Sarti was killed in Mexico and his papers and luggage were examined by the "narcs" who then set in motion their Brazilian counterparts, supplying them with information. Sarti was reasonably well-known to the police organizations concerned with the traffic. His record included also the murder of a policeman in Brussels. It seems that characters such as Sarti and Christian David, good marksmen of a violent disposition, had been assigned by the Union Corsa to serve as bodyguards to Auguste Ricord. It seems that after the arrest of Ricord, Sarti and Christian were promoted to making contacts and carrying out executive tasks.

Mafia or Union Corsa?

Their relationship with Buscetta still remain unexplained. Or could it be explained only upon verification that the tendency of the supreme council of the United States' Mafia is that of returning to narcotics as it was suspected by the "narcs" after the representatives of the most important Mafia "families" met a little over two months ago in New York.

On behalf of whom did Buscetta speak at his meetings with Sarti and Beau Serge? How important was he in the rigid hierarchy of the "Cosa Nostra"? These questions still have not been answered. At the end of last week, Ibrahim Sued, always avoiding to mention the inelegant surname, brandished in front of O Globo TV cameras a book on the Mafia in which mention is made of a certain Buscetta, now also addressed by Ibrahim as Buschetta. The truth of the matter, however, is that Buscetta is a name that does not appear in most of the documents on the Mafia, nor even on the detailed chart published by the "The New York Magazine Press" on the Queens Mafia, where he lived.

At any rate, it is known that Tomaso Buscetta was born in Palermo, Sicily, and that his name is in a list sent to the Department of Justice by the Italian police in July of last year of 1,114 persons charged with criminal activities connected with the Mafia. Tomaso is also believed to have held an important position in the Palermo, Barbera "family," during a "war" with the Genco family. He was released on grounds of insufficient evidence, and entered Canada and the United States always under assumed names. Before coming to Brazil he had been to Uruguay. These countries are undoubtedly important in the heroin traffic. Canada is the operating base of Jean Venturi, one of the Union Corsa "capi" whom until recently made up in the company of a Santo Trafficante Jr., of Miami, who was indicated as chief of the 24 Mafia "families" in the United States, the coordinating duo for the last stage of the heroin trip before its delivery to the 300,000 drug addicts who wait for it in New York.

The Problem and Its Solution

The arrest of Buscetta and his associates may be only another skirmish in the war on drugs. The magnitude of their business can only be evaluated on the basis of its outward-evidence of prosperity such as the offer by

Approved for Release: 2020/08/17 C00023250

Approved for Release: 2020/08/17 C00023250

Beau Serge of 100,000 dollars to each of the four policemen who escorted him to a police precinct as an attempt at being taken to Galeao instead. The action of the Brazilian police was officially praised by the United States authorities who are believed to have participated in the investigations with only two agents sent to Rio.

For the policeman Nelson Duarte, well known for his appearances in the "Flavio Cavalcanti Program," and for his crusade on drugs, carried out through conferences in schools, however, that praise will have a somewhat bitter taste. In January, Nelson Duarte, led perhaps by his keen sense for shady dealings had detained Lucien Sarti and Helena Ferreira for investigation, on suspicion that the dollars freely spent in large amounts by them in the gay Rio night life was counterfeit. Duarte affirms that he only set them free after consultation with his superiors. However, he is now accused of receiving 40,000 dollars, i.e. 240,000 cruzeiros for the release of Sarti and Helena.

Once dismantled the Brazilian "Mafia," as it is now called even by the New York Times which had a short note on it in one of its inside pages, there remains for the Brazilian authorities a problem to solve -- that of Nelson Duarte -- and perhaps also the solution for a mysterious case that happened in Ilhabela, off the Sao Paulo coast.

Last May, a corpse found on one of the beaches of that small locality was given as that of a woman supposedly murdered by her lover Claudio Daniel Rodrigues who is believed to have committed suicide soon thereafter. After the arrest of Beau Serge it became known that he used to visit that island and stay at the same motel as Claudio, whose death would not have been just the tragic end of a love affair, but the consequence of the couple's liaison with the drug peddlers. Would the far-reaching arms of the Mafia or Union Corsa have stretched at a certain moment even toward the bucolic scenery of Ilhabela? It is possible, anything is possible.

COPYRIGHT: Veja, Sao Paulo, 1972

7657
CSO: 4201-W

Approved for Release: 2020/08/17 C00023250